UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/594
25 July 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 25 JULY 1996 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey the attached communication dated 25 July 1996 (see annex), which I have received from the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

I would appreciate your bringing the enclosed letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI

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Annex

Letter dated 25 July 1996 from the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to inform you that, at my request, an urgent meeting of the Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution was convened today, at the ambassadorial level, to consider the grave situation prevailing in Burundi.

Please find herewith the text of the communiqué issued following the meeting of the Central Organ (see appendix). I would appreciate if you could transmit the same to the President of the Security Council.

In the course of its deliberations, the Central Organ stressed the need for close consultation between the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the countries of the region with a view to coordinating the efforts aimed at preventing a catastrophe in Burundi and at promoting a negotiated solution to the crisis.

I should be grateful if you would kindly circulate the present letter and the attached communiqué of the Central Organ as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Salim Ahmed SALIM

Appendix

Statement on the grave situation in Burundi issued on 25 July 1996 by the Central Organ of the Organization of African Unity

At the request of the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), an urgent meeting of the Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, at the ambassadorial level, was convened today to consider the situation prevailing in Burundi.

The Central Organ expressed its deep concern at the deteriorating situation in Burundi, which has now become extremely dangerous and highly explosive. The Central Organ warned, in no uncertain terms, against any attempt to overthrow the legitimate Government of President Sylvestre Ntibantuganya. Any attempt to take over power through illegal means will not be accepted by Africa and will be strongly condemned and opposed by OAU.

The Central Organ called upon Member States and the international community at large to prepare themselves to isolate completely any such regime that could take over leadership in Burundi through the use of force or on any other pretext. In such an event, Member States and the international community should also be prepared to impose sanctions against the regime.

The Central Organ underscored the importance and urgency for all the political actors inside and outside Burundi to enter into meaningful negotiations under the auspices of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere with a view to finding a just and lasting solution to the crisis in their country. In this regard, it stressed the importance of a speedy implementation of the decisions of the Arusha Regional Summit, in particular the provision of security assistance to Burundi, which certainly is needed now more than ever before. In this respect, the Central Organ appealed to the leaders of the region to act in solidarity, cohesion and concert in order to meet this grave challenge.

At the same time, it is very clear that, in the event that there continues to be an obstruction to the provision of security assistance as decided upon by the Arusha Summit in accordance with the request of the Government of Burundi, then the only other option is that of a multinational force for humanitarian intervention as recommended by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The Central Organ undertook to follow very closely developments in that country and decided to remain actively seized of the situation.